manitOba
advisOry council
On the status
Of women

Telephone: 945-6281 450 — 500 Portage Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3X1

INFORMATION

ON

PORNOGRAPHY

Compliments
of

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Of women

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of women

Telephone: 944-6281 693 Taylor Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 3T9

RESOLUTION:

It is resolved that the Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography's definition of pornography is acceptable for use by the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Council resolves to advocate and work for the eradication of pornography as defined:

> "Pornography is the verbal or pictorial material which represents or describes sexual behaviour that is degrading or abusive to one or more of the participants in such a way as to endorse the degradation." (Helen E. Longino)

Passed June 22, 1983
Manitoba Advisory Council
on the Status of Women

Winnipeg Sun June 22, 1983

Feminists preach porno nonsense

There are only two things, really, to say about pornography. It has always been around and people of taste have always found it wretched.

It is nothing but rank prejudice, I admit, but some subjects are dismissable almost purely on account of the sort of people who get bothered by them.

The controversy over pornography — video, printed, imagined and real — is one.

Ever since then-British Columbia MP Simma Holt told a parliamentary committee investigating pornography that looking at such objects as rubber penises made her "almost upchuck," it seemed evident sex shops were not going to destroy the moral fibre of this nation, only Holt's digestive tract.

In a fit of journalistic enthusiasm after her statement, I took to slugging along Yonge Street searching out places selling what Simma had encountered in the neat and sanitary rooms of parliamentary committee hearings.

It must be my failure not to "upchuck" at reproductions of human sexual organs. Nor to get particularly upset by silly magazines showing pasty women doing unspeakable things to poor exploited barnyard animals.

Nor do I find anything dangerous in seeing photographs of housewives or single girls making an extra buck by allowing themselves to be tied up and apparently menaced by whips and chains for the camera. No amount of brushing hides the ordinariness of their varicose veins, cellulite and pimples. It is quite reassuring in a curious way. Nor can the clearly posed nature of the pictures be disguised.

It is a separate and really common-sense matter that to use underage children for sex magazines is wrong. It is a criminal offence now and should

continue to be. We need no new legislation for that.

Anyway, there are lots of men and women who, when wearing a school uniform or knickers, can look about 12 years old. That should take care of the tastes of those poor unhappy adults who need to see little girls and boys in order to satisfy their curious needs.

Nor should our society hesitate to take all *reasonable steps* to protect our children from this muck.

That means, no entry to smut stores for the underage. No renting of nasty porno movies to kids. In fact, it means keeping all the measures we now have.

But since nothing is perfectable, and attempting to make it perfect only infringes on the rights of others, it is foolish to pretend we can eliminate the possibility of some adult renting a horrid video flick showing a woman being trussed up and mutilated — and that movie finding its way into the hands of kids.

This is scarcely an epidemic. Such magazines have been around for years and there has never been an epidemic of interest in them among the younger set who have far more refined tastes and varied interests than many of their elders.

About a month ago, I was sent a package. It came from an anonymous source and turned out to be pornographic video tapes. A few things, other than the naked bodies on the screen, were evident. The men were portrayed as imbecilic morons, with body deformities that resembled growth common to the protuberances of the Elephant Man. They also had far less command of the English language than the women.

Those movies featuring the mutilation of women portrayed men as beasts of the most sub-human kind, while the women seemed relatively normal — if somewhat overly naive or vulnerable.

I threw out the tapes and forgot about the whole subject until Ontario Attorney-General Roy McMurtry got on the porn bandwagon again. Last week New Democrat MP Lynn McDonald began demanding legislation to protect women and children from pornography. She quoted studies which she claimed showed pornography increased rape and that males who viewed violent pornography were prone to punishing women.

I have long learned to live with McMurtry's various moral pronouncements. I do not expect anything of him other than a reflex high jump as the latest bandwagon rolls by.

But when it comes to McDonald's statements, I will not keep quiet when our natural repugnance to something sleazy like pornography is being put in the service of the false ideology of feminism.

No study of violence, pornography and women shows anything conclusive, apart from the fact that maybe a lot of the people who abuse women enjoy violent pornography.

So what? Anyone who rapes or hits another person is deviant. There is no way of telling whether they would have hit more people if they hadn't read or viewed the stuff, or whether it was the fact that more of them drink beer or eat spinach salads, or have had nasty moms, that is the real triggering factor in their violence.

While I can't possibly claim to be an expert on studies of this nature, I have read enough to know there isn't a single one that's conclusive and there is a wide body of evidence showing violent pornography is a safety valve for diseased individuals.

To suggest, as McDonald and the feminists do that pornography expresses the underlying cultural thrust of our society — the desire of all males to dominate women — is untrue. It is a sexist slur of extraordinary proportions.

When it comes to sado-masochism, more males than women like to be tied up and whipped. Ask any psychiatrist. Consult the literature of the ages. It is the ladies in the high leather boots with thongs in their hands who predominate in this area. Sado-masochism is dominated by women, not men.

It is only in the movies that men are getting their own back.

Of course, violence and sexual deviation are entirely independent of gender. McDonald might want to read — and agonize — over the problems one feminist group in California is causing the women's movement.

In a recent article in the left-wing magazine of choice *The Nation*, feminists were wringing their hands over the existence of a West Coast sado-masochist lesbian group. Such a group plays havoc with the theory that sexual violence is the result of male oppression. *The Nation* came up with a marvellously convoluted theory to try and explain it away.

But it could be accepted only by the True Believer — not those who are cursed with allowing their views to be shaped by common sense.

Winnipeg Sun August 7, 1983

YOUR VIEW

Amiel is far too glib

Editor:

There seem to be certain key words which cause the gears of Barbara Amiel's brain to grind shockingly — providing us with noise, smoke, and sparks, but little else. "Feminist" is one of these words.

Ms. Amiel, in her article Feminists Preach Porno Nonsense, indicates that for ordinary citizens to be repelled by pornography is quite normal and wholesome; feminist objections on the other hand are an ideological statement and so to be dismissed. In fact, those of us who object to pornography, whether feminist or not, object because pornography is not only degrading to women, children, and men, it is also harmful and dangerous.

Ms. Amiel's article is such a morass of opinionated half-thoughts, misinformation, and illogicality, that it is difficult to respond briefly.

Perhaps the most important point to make however, is that Ms. Amiel's view that there is not much "to get particularly upset by" is not an accurate reflection of the situation. I think most of us share a suspicion that there are very good reasons for being concerned — certainly something is prompting women and men to communicate with their MLAs and MPs; call for changes in the obscenity laws; support legislation to change the Broadcasting Act; and at times to take to the streets to demonstrate their opposition to pornography.

There is more to pornography than Ms. Amiel's attempt at analysis via the "one-liner.":

"silly magazines showing pasty women"
"housewives or single girls making an extra buck by allowing themselves to be tied up."

There is a new, spreading pornography which is brutal — it involves chaining, whipping, mutiliation, killing, gang rape and on and one. The objects of this are generally women and children; the perpetrators invariably male. And at times subtly, at times not so subtly, the message is given that women really like to be treated in this way — that "no really means yes." The message of today's pornography is clear, and it is dangerous: children like sex with adults; women enjoy being beaten and tortured.

It is a cliche almost, but true nevertheless, that if the groupings were altered — Jews or blacks or natives were continually depicted in the ways women are in pornography, that no one would have any trouble seeing that these depictions were degrading, abusive and harmful.

Pornography is harmful. Ms. Amiel takes outdated refuge in "a wide body of evidence" that "violent pornography is a safety valve for diseased individuals."

The basis for this assumption, the U.S. Presidential Commission on Obscenity and Pornography Report, was rejected in total by the U.S. Senate in 1970 because its recommendations were not supported by the evidence presented, and yet it is still quoted to promote the harmlessness of pornography.

It is interesting that Hans Nestius, the father of "Sweden's sexual revolution" and a major force in the repeal of Sweden's Law on the Offending of Decency and Morality is, in 1983, involved in a campaign to 1.) forbid public display of pornography, 2.) forbid child pornography, and 3.) ban violent pornography. He is appalled by their effects on society.

Of course there are limited studies on the relation between violent pornography and real violence against women — it takes a long time for some questions to be asked, but there is growing evidence that exposure to violence against women evokes violent and aggressive behavior towards women.

Can we really afford to be glib, smart or self-satisfied when we approach this issue? I recognize that Ms. Amiel's style of journalism is intentionally inflammatory — always a useful technique when one cannot rely on integrity, or vision, or sound and considered response — but in this article she has wandered in her confusion, into the realm of the irresponsible. Most of the "nonsense" is encompassed in her own writing.

Mary Beth Dolin
Minister Responsible for the
Status of Women

THE MANITOBA ACTION COMMITTEE
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

MACSW

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's Hotel Bar Survey

Over the summer, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's Violence Against Women (VAW) and Media Monitoring Subcommittees undertook a survey of hotel pubs in Winnipeg to determine where women can go for a social drink without being accosted by adult (read: pornographic) entertainment.

Our subcommittee members realize that pornography degrades women. We also recognize the link between pornography and other forms of violence against women. We are tired of supporting this degradation and violence against women by paying for drinks in hotels that offer pornographic entertainment.

We also knew it was time to step-up our action against hotel pornography when we heard about the woman, in the States, who was raped on a pool table in a bar while onlookers merely stood and watched. Porn Industry profiteers took their cue from this incident and featured a similar rape scene in a pornographic magazine. This is not an isolated case as those who work at the Rape Crisis Center at Klinic, for example, know all too well.

The survey began by pinpointing the 98 hotel bars in the City, on a Winnipeg map. Violence Against Women members followed this up by phoning the bars and asking hotel staff if adult entertainment was offered. Pornographic entertainment in about half of these bars was found to include stripper jamborees, mud wrestling, wet T-shirt contests, and 'blue' movies on satellite television.

After the phoning was completed, VAW and Media Monitoring joined forces to check out in person, the almost 50 bars that claimed to be porn-free. Then, the enclosed list was compiled including those hotel bars that do not offer pornographic entertainment. We urge you to frequent these bars anytime you decide to go out for a drink and ask you to encourage your friends and family to do the same. Also, keep the porno-free hotel list in mind when booking hotel rooms for visitors to the City.

We want to encourage those bar managers who do not offer porn to keep it that way. We have sent a letter of appreciation to all these bars, thanking the managers for keeping pornography out.

A special mention has to be made concerning the Downs Hotel. It is owned by a woman. Country music bands, talent nights, and dancing are the major entertainments available. Even the television screen is porn-free and often features cartoons. If anyone is caught swearing at this bar, he or she is asked to put 50¢ into a pot. Just goes to show the kind of 'class' establishment a woman can run.

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224 – 388 Donald Street,
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2J2
Telephone: 942-2000

356 – 11th Street,
Brandon, Manitoba R7A 4J8
Telephone: 725-2955

Any hotel pubs that do not appear on the list should be boycotted because they offer pornographic entertainment. We have sent these hotel managers a letter explaining why we think this is unacceptable and asking them to change their entertainment policies. We have made them aware of our boycott. Also, if any of the hotel bars on the list should start to offer porn, please let us know at 942-2000 and we will delete them from our list.

We would like to add that the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women is not condemning those women who make a living through pornography. We know that the economic situation faced by the majority of women makes it necessary for some women to work as strippers, etc., in order to make ends meet. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women and other women's groups as well as government officials will have to continue to work hard so that women will no longer have to take jobs that degrade all women. Our survey will take dollars away from those who profit most from this degradation.

Submitted by Tanya Lester on behalf of
Violence Against Women and Media Monitoring Subcommittees of the Manitoba Action
Committee on the Status of Women

THE MANITOBA ACTION COMMITTEE
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

MACSW

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's Hotel Survey List

The following Hotel Pubs do not have pornographic entertainment:

Aberdeen, 230 Carlton, ph. 942-7481
Bell, S.W. Henry and Main, ph. 943-7949
Birchwood, 2520 Portage, ph. 885-4478
Cambridge Inn, 1022 Pembina, ph. 284-0183
Carlton Inn, 220 Carlton, ph. 942-0881
Central Hotel, 201 Melrose Trans., ph. 222-3746
Charterhouse, S.E. Hargrave & York, ph. 942-0101
Delta Malborough, 331 Smith, ph. 942-6411
Downs, 3740 Portage, ph. 837-5831
Fort Garry, 222 Broadway, ph. 942-8251
Garrick, 287 Garry, ph. 943-7172
Green Briar, 1611 Main, ph. 339-6174
Holiday Inn, 350 St. Mary, ph. 452-4747
Holiday Inn, 1330 Pembina Hwy., ph. 452-4747
International Inn, 1808 Wellington, ph. 786-4801
Kildonan, 2100 Main, ph. 339-0828
LaSalle, 346 Nairn, ph. 668-5367
Leland, S.E. Williams & Albert, ph. 943-5441
Lincoln, 1030 McPhillips, ph. 589-7314
Mall, 469 Portage, ph. 783-7244
Manor, 692 Main, ph. 942-1343
Mount Royal, 186 Higgins, ph. 942-8012
Northern, 826 Main St., ph. 582-6346
Occidental, 631 Main, ph. 943-0635
Nicolett, 632 Lafleche, ph. 247-3144
Northstar, 288 Portage, ph. 956-0410
Norwood, 112 Marion, ph. 233-4475
Patricia, 713 Main, ph. 942-1386
Pembina, Pembina & Park, ph. 453-3724
Ramada, 1824 Pembina, ph. 269-7700
Rivercrest, 4200 Main, ph. 339-7968
Royal George, 123 Regent, ph. 224-1882
St. James, 1719 Portage, ph. 888-2341
St. Norbert, 3540 Pembina, ph. 269-1290
St. Regis, 285 Smith, ph. 942-0171
Savoy, 686 Main, ph. 943-4323
Tourist, 119 Provencher, ph. 247-3103
Travelodge, 20 Alpine, ph. 253-1301
Vendome, 308 Fort, ph. 942-4010
Westin, 2 Lombard, ph. 957-1350
Winnipeg Hotel, 214 Main, ph. 942-7762
Woodbine, 466 Main, ph. 942-9713

Please try to take your service to the above hotels when you are going for a drink. If you should find pornographic entertainment at any of

224 – 388 Donald Street,
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2J2
Telephone: 942-2000

356 – 11th Street,
Brandon, Manitoba R7A 4J8
Telephone: 725-2955

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the hotels listed, please contact the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women at 942-2000 and the hotel will be deleted from the list. As in any drinking establishment, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women cannot guarantee safety in these hotels. Take the usual precautions.

MANITOBA ACTION COMMITTEE
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

RECOMMENDATIONS

ON

PORNOGRAPHY

The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's recommended definition of PORNOGRAPHY.

> "Pornography is the verbal or pictorial material which represents or describes sexual behavior that is degrading or abusive to one or more of the participants in such a way as to endorse the degradation."

Taken from: Helen E. Longino, "Pornography, Oppression and Freedom, A Closer Look". Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography, ed. Laura Lederer (New York, William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1980), page 43.

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women September 1983

Recommendations to the Federal Government

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's recommendations, prepared by the Media Monitoring and Violence Against Women subcommittees, to amend the Canadian Criminal Code re Obscenity.

Throughout the Criminal Code, we recommend the term "pornographic" be added to "obscene, immoral, disgusting, indecent," etc.. (See previous document for definition of pornographic.)

Throughout the Criminal Code, we recommend the phrase "any matter or thing" be used to describe the form in which obscenity and pornography may be presented. This would insure that all types of obscenity and pornography are included.

Section 159.8:

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that the proposed amendment to Section 159.8 be instituted with three changes. The term "pornographic" be added with "obscene", strike "dominant characteristic" and add "part there of", and the word "undue" be struck. In our opinion, no pornography or obscenity should be tolerated, whether it be the dominant characteristic or not. The word "undue" suggests that exploitation is allowable as long as it is not undue. We believe exploitation should not be allowed. Degrading should be defined rather than left to interpretation. Suggested definition or degrading, (taken from Helen Lagino in Take Back the Night):

> "Behavior that is degrading or abusive includes physical harm or abuse, and physical or psychological coercion. In addition, behavior which ignores or devalues the real interests, desires and experiences of one or more participants in any way is degrading. Finally, that a person has chosen or consented to be harmed, abused or subjected to coercion does not alter the degrading character of such behavior."

Section 159.9:

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women agrees with the proposed addition of 159.9 to the Criminal Code.

Section 163.1:

We recommend that the word "theater" be substituted with "public or private place" to ensure all pornography is understood to be illegal, as well the word "theater" is much too limiting.

Section 163.2:

Similarly, the word "theater" should be replaced by "public or private place".

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Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's Recommendations - cont'd

Section 163 note:

Provincial Approval: We recommend that the provincial film classification boards be empowered to recommend to the Attorney General that a film or video tape is pornographic and/or obscene and for it to be prosecuted.

Section 165:

We recommend that 165 be repealed and the following be substituted; 165.1. Everyone who commits an offence under Section 159, 162, 163.1 or 164 is guilty of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for five years.

Section 165.2:

Everyone who commits an offence under Section 161 or 163.2 is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction.
Those making the substantially larger profits on pornography are the producers and distributors, not the participants, therefore a summary conviction is no deterrent to them.

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's recommendations re the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunication Commission.

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that the CRTC takes measures necessary to ensure that satellite signals received in Canada do not escape examination under the law regarding obscenity and pornography. Satellite received programming must abide by Canadian standards and Criminal Code.

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that the CRTC, in licensing broadcasters, seek compliance from them that they will not broadcast material which is degrading to women, in accordance with the Report of the Task Force on Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Broadcast Media and the proposed recommendations on pornography.

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that women be included in the list of minorities protected from "abusive comment or abusive pictorial representation" under the Broadcast Act. Presently racial and religious minorities are protected under the Act from hate literature, but it is legal to broadcast material which incites violence and hatred of women. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women feels that women should be extended these rights of citizenship.

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women

Recommendations

Civic & Provincial Levels of Government

Crown and Vice

1. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that the Attorney General's office and Vice Division develop guidelines on obscenity to be used for prosecution purposes. Whereas neither department has any form of written guidelines for such purposes, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women further recommends that community input on these guidelines be sought from social services and women's groups who have acquired expertise in the area of pornography and obscenity.

Film Board

2. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that the Film Classification Board be empowered to license all video entertainment for public showings and for private showings where an entry fee will be charged.

3. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women further recommends that the Film Classification Board undertake to educate itself on the issue of pornography so that it may responsibly fulfill its mandate to provide guidance to the public on the suitability of films or videos for an audience. In addition, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that individuals who have a background knowledge in the area of pornography and obscenity should be appointed to the Film Classification Board.

Satellite Signals

4. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that the City of Winnipeg enact a bylaw requiring all public entertainment in their beverage rooms to post an advance listing, each day, at the entrance of their establishment, of the satellite entertainment they intend on showing. This will make the establishments responsible for the programming of entertainment they provide, as well as allowing patrons of the establishments to make the choice whether they wish to view such entertainment. It has been the experience of Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women that hotels presently are at liberty to show pornographic entertainment via satellite to their patrons, whether or not they want to view it. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women feels that the public has the right not to be inundated with such programming against one's will, and further that they have the right to be warned that such programming will be displayed.

5. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women also recommends that the Attorney-General's office, the Vice Division of the Winnipeg Police Department and the Film Classification Board undertake to monitor satellite programming for a period not less than three months to discern the regularity and constancy of "adult" programming via satellite. If it is deemed by such a joint committee that such programming contains pornographic programming, then public establishments should be prohibited from showing those stations.

Failing this action, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women suggests that the Vice Division should assume responsibility

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5. (cont'd)

for acquiring a copy of satellite movies shown in the event that a complaint is made about such a movie. As satellite programming remains virtually unregulated, it is felt that some responsibility be taken by hotel owners and some initiative taken by the Vice Division in order to facilitate the laying of obscenity charges in such instances. As imported commodities from the United States, the same restrictions which apply to print imported pronography should be applied to satellite pornography.

6. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recommends that the City of Winnipeg enact a bylaw similar to one recently enacted by Metro Toronto Council which requires all stores selling 'adult' magazines and books to keep such material at least 1.5 metres off the ground, behind a stand which enables only the titles to be visable. Such material should also be placed behind counters in such stores. While some stores presently keep their 'adult' magazines behind the counter, most are on an open shelf, where readers often stand loitering in front of the magazine area leafing through the magazines. Also by allowing such publications to remain out in the open, they are readily available to children.

Porno trade ridicules law, reader says

The porno scene is very real. And the facts are even scarier than they seem. For many of Bryan Johnson's "facts" that are based on sociologist Thelma McCormack's research are wrong and misleading. Miss McCormack's research is woefully dated, highly biased and misleads the public in an important debate.

Prominent research psychologists have concluded that there is a "direct causal relationship between exposure to aggressive erotica and violence against women," and have refuted most of the erroneous conclusions of the American Presidential Commission on Obscenity and Pornography a decade ago.

Since that time, pornographic imagery and the depiction of sexual violence has mushroomed in magazines, movies, television and on videotape. In fact, 89.6 per cent of the pornography available today was either unavailable or sold under the counter in 1970. This imagery is more frequent and more violent than it was a decade and even a year ago. Sadomasochistic bondage and domination imagery was the most prevalent imagery in 1,760 heterosexual pornographic magazines surveyed in 1981.

Pornography is highly lucrative. From annual revenues of less than $100-million a decade ago, the North American pornography industry alone will gross more than $10-billion this year. Playboy, Penthouse, Playgirl and Hustler distributed one million copies a month last year solely in Canada. Playboy magazine alone grossed over $65-million last year.

Pornographic videotapes will be the profit leaders by volume. Their distribution is virtually unregulated in Canada. Canada does have a substantial domestic "branch plant" video porn industry that successfully circumvents existing laws. And children can legally rent and buy pornographic videotapes at the individual video store's discretion. This pornography is very difficult to prosecute successfully in Ontario.

Reputable social scientists acknowledge that psychologist Seymour Feshbach's "catharsis hypothesis" (the more you see, the less you do) was disproved a decade ago. To purport, as sociologist McCormack does, that viewing heavy doses of sexual violence reduces violence toward women, especially when used as "therapy" for jailed sexual offenders, is ludicrous and takes the public for fools.

Recent Scandinavian studies show that relaxing laws relating to the distribution of pornography leads to an increase, not a decrease in sexual assaults and sex-related crimes. These laws have been subsequently tightened.

The real issue in the pornography debate is the alarming expansion of an organized multi-billion-dollar pornography industry that ridicules existing Canadian law, profits from degrading women and incites its consumers to violence against women and children.

David Scott
Member
Pornography Subcommittee
Metro Task Force on Violence
Against Women and Children
Toronto

Rights and Wrongs

Censorship and the New Pornography

by Lynn McDonald

In Nelly McClung's day women didn't have the vote or the right to practice most professions, but they could go to the corner store without seeing their sex humiliated by pornographic magazines. And there was simply no equivalent to the degradation of film and television pornography, with their powerful images of subordination, objectification and sadism.

For those who are unfamiliar with the new pornography, let us be clear about the content. It's brutal. I've seen a young, male reporter, apparently in good health, blanch and leave a showing of porn films. Women are chained, kicked, strapped into machines for whipping, suspended against pillories, spread-eagled, and bound by barbed wire. Behinds are caned, nipples squashed, genitalia stabbed and limbs hacked away. In some of the more subtle and perhaps more dangerous pornography women are shown to enjoy the brutality and humiliation. "Women really like it, after all," is the message: "no" doesn't mean *no*.

Is this fair? At the time of writing Playboy (Canada) programming has just begun and, so far, has been cautious. The commercials showed women only as stupid nudes, but with no violence. In the United States however, the Playboy channel is already broadcasting three hours a night and we have videotapes of some of the evenings' offerings. I saw one which included, with considerable portrayal of women with low IQ's and no clothes, whippings, chainings, a knife in the vagina, several "no means yes" scenes, and two extremely vicious gang rapes. There was *no* male nudity. There was very little of what might be termed "erotica," in the sense of the portrayal of sexual *passion*, for sex is not what pornography, including Playboy, is all about. Sexual explicitness is considerably limited when only one partner strips. Anyone who didn't know the facts of life before wouldn't know after watching these shows. Even the gang rapes showed nothing of the sex act itself. Rather, the action focussed on the capture of the woman, tearing her clothes off and holding her down. The camera zoomed onto the woman's face, as she screamed in pain.

Maureen Paxton

It is difficult to imagine that the current pornographic portrayal of women would ever be acceptable for blacks or Jews. Consider a channel broadcasting, three hours a night, programmes with whites fully clothed, blacks nude: whites giving orders, blacks grovelling and begging; whites whipping and chaining blacks; blacks being spat and urinated on. Or consider programming with Jews dancing in the nude, their stars of David bouncing up and down against breasts or genitals while uniformed Gestapo agents crack whips and kick them in the face. Would there then be as many outraged letters to the editor from civil libertarians concerned about the dangers of censorship?

The kind of pornography currently being shown on pay-TV and video cassettes is unprecedented in human history. Whatever effects *words* have in influencing behaviour — this is a whole new scale. I have no objection to any *text* being printed. Visual images in print, especially glossy colour, are more powerful, and thus possibly harmful. But it is film, television and video pornography that is the subject of concern here. The implications, in terms of instigating violence against women and children, has only begun to be documented. Clinical psychologists recount patients' difficulties with recurring, painful, visual images. Doctors dealing with child abuse are discovering new and more grotesque forms of abuse. Women in shelters for battered wives report being forced to act out pornographic scenes which their husbands have seen in films. Life indeed follows art.

There is growing evidence from the experimental psychological literature that exposure to violence against women elicits punitive and aggressive behaviour to women. Exposure to scenes in which violence is legitimated — women really like it — is even more closely associated with aggressive behaviour. Thus male subjects shown films combining sex and violence to women were more likely to react aggressively to a woman afterwards, to inflict pain on a woman in a laboratory experiment, and even several days later, to justify rape, than males shown sex films without this combination, or other films. Experts also tell us that the ostensibly non-violent magazines have their dangers; Playboy, for example, has by subtly legitimating incest.

Pornography is not only an issue of philosophy and academic law about the concept of community standards. Nor is it only a matter of personal moral judgement about which honest people might differ. There are real victims, overwhelmingly women and children. This means that all the old debates about censorship are outmoded. *Ulysses* is in print (it was even read recently on Dublin radio). *Lady Chatterley's Lover* scarcely raises an eyebrow. No one wants to impede the publication of words, but yes, some of us do want to stop the broadcasting, and other dissemination, of certain degrading and, especially, violent images. To consider this question properly, we have to distinguish between broadcasting, for the air waves in Canada are defined as public property, and other media.

Broadcasting here is already tightly regulated, so much so that censorship is hardly at issue. Every beer and aspirin commercial, every toy ad directed at children, is pre-screened by regulatory authorities. There are regulations concerning the portrayal of venereal disease and birth control. There are rules on political reporting and religion. Broadcasters, public and private, must obtain a license from the CRTC, which entails certain obligations. In the case of private broadcasting, it's a business; companies make money selling commercial time or subscriptions. In exchange for the use of the public's air waves to make a buck, a

broadcaster must promise to provide certain services and conform to certain standards. In the case of pay-TV, many applied but few were chosen. Were the companies that were turned down censored?

The CRTC hesitated for a number of years before licensing pay-TV. They were well aware of certain dangers: more Hollywood movies and American sports. Eventually, they were persuaded that opportunities could be gained for the Canadian production industry. Canadian writers, directors and actors would get work. The Playboy package offends then as branch plantism, imported ideas, structure and packaging, with the Canadian content furnished by Canadian women's flesh. Yet the CRTC was warned by the National Action Committee's Mediawatch to consider the implications of pay-TV for the portrayal of women. The Canadian Conference of the Arts noted the prevalence of pornography on American pay-TV, but, again, the warnings were ignored. Thus, when the CRTC, along with the public, learned what "adult programming" really meant, they were unprepared. The CRTC has even claimed, disingenuously, to be unable to do anything until license-renewal time five years hence. It has called for voluntary self-regulation by the pay-TV companies.

What Can The CRTC Do?

In fact, the CRTC has been amply endowed with regulatory powers which it routinely uses for such critical matters as drug, booze, and cookie advertising, feminine hygiene products and lotteries. The CRTC regulations prohibit abusive comments or pictorial representations of members of any race, religion or creed. Abuse by gender, however, is perfectly legal. The public members of the CRTC Task Force on Sex Stereotyping in the Media recommended, in effect as a minority report, that gender be added to the prohibitive list. So far, the commission has declined to act. The Task Force as a whole, however, did recommend that pay-TV come under the same, positive, guidelines as other broadcasting. Again, so far, the commission has not acted, although it did accept the report in principle, and has a committee studying the matter. These guidelines, agreed to by the private broadcasters, the CBC and the advertising industry, stress the portrayal of women as equal members of society, in a diversity of roles.

Given the CRTC's lack of action, the problem devolves back to the government and Parliament. The Broadcasting Act provides the framework within which the commission regulates. The provisions against abuse, noted above, should be moved to the Act and sex be added to the list. Parliament should make clear, in legislation, that abuse, by race, religion or gender, is not acceptable. It already gives as the purpose of broadcasting to "strengthen, enrich and safeguard" the "social, economic, political and cultural fabric of Canada." Surely no one would argue that pornography makes any such lofty contribution to our country.

The Civil Liberties Argument

Some people do argue the civil liberties case — certain civil liberties associations with the BC Civil Liberties Association leading the way. These organizations seem to be fighting still for the publication of James Joyce and D.H. Lawrence, and even Voltaire and Diderot! The BC Civil Liberties policy dates from 1963 but is not up for revision, I was told, because the principle is still *political liberty*. Spokesperson Reg Robson insisted the association was well aware of the brutality of the current pornography, but that it made no difference. So they continue to proclaim "freedom of the mind" and "the free access to ideas":

> *Freedom of communications (in all ways in which men communicate with each other) is a vital part of the substance of self-government. Moreover the prescription in favour of freedom of communications must be held at the same time that one recognizes that it carries potential danger.... The ideas which men have and advocate may well be dangerous. Men may act upon them, upsetting cherished ways, institutions and values as they do so.*

But we must accept this in the name of self-government:

> *Self-governing men may harm themselves, they may even become depraved and corrupt as they govern themselves. But not by reason of their freedom... merely through it.*

Thus, while women are worried about rape and mutilation, the BC Civil Liberties Association is concerned only that men communicating ideas with each other not be corrupted. The increase in child abuse is not recognized, unless perhaps as one of the instances in which cherished ways are being upset.

Scientific arguments civil libertarians raise tend to focus on Scandinavia, and to be years out of date. The pornography shown in Scandinavian sex shops is of stag movie vintage: girlie shows. The much-cited Danish research that showed a decline in sex offences after the liberation of pornography laws has now been thoroughly discredited. The decreases concern several trivial offences; there was a slight *increase* in violent sex crimes, even with only the old-fashioned, non-violent pornography.

Brothers, events have passed you by, and your innocence ill suits you for work as political advocates. Please read the *current* scientific literature, and reread your Mill "On Liberty." Anyone who accepts Mill's dictum on the limits to freedom in harm to others, I suggest, must now accept some measure of restriction. In the case of broadcasting, the issue is not, strictly speaking, of censorship, but use of the public's air waves to make money. One could buy the same shows on video cassettes, or go to the cinema. Some of us, though, would go further to advocate censorship of video cassettes and films, now that we have seen the new pornography. People will differ as to where the line should be drawn: to exclude only extreme brutality, all or most brutality, or degradation/humiliation as well.

Before leaving the issue of censorship, let it be noted that the civil liberties associations have never defended women when *they* have been the victims of censorship. For years, the CBC and the private broadcasters would not allow women to be news reporters or announcers. Women's issues and events were routinely excluded from coverage as not constituting "hard news." Even now, women appear on average only a third as often as men on television in any capacity — less than 10 per cent in serious roles. Women's organizations have long protested this institutional censorship, and never received any support from the civil liberties defenders of "free access to ideas." *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Ulysses* can now be found in public libraries. Voltaire's *Lettres Philosophiques* can be read with impunity. The Bastille stops no one from publishing anything. Actually, now it is only a subway stop on the Paris Métro. Diderot's *Encyclopédie* is now safe from the censor, and he will never be imprisoned in Vincennes again. Vincennes, now, is only a park. In Voltaire's day, it must be remembered, it was the Department of Justice that provided spectacles of torture, not the Department of Communications. He, then, fought *for* the victims of torture, against the wielders of whip and rack. In those days the struggle for free expression was part of a larger struggle for social and economic justice. Now the defenders of free expression serve, along with sick minds, big business interests and an underworld that makes millions off pornography. One can question whether they have chosen the better part. □

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PORNOGRAPHY
Freedom for Whom?

by Penni Mitchell

The frigid air bit with a stinging reminder as dusk descended. It was January 18, one of the coldest days in Winnipeg last winter and there were fourteen days left to convince the federal government that First Choice's Playboy programming violated the company's licensing agreement with the CRTC. About 60 people converged beneath the mirrored office tower on the corner of Portage and Smith to deliver the message upstairs to the Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission.

Thousands of others protested in 18 Canadian cities that day, demanding that the CRTC revoke First Choice's license for making a $30 million deal with Playboy to include pornographic programming as part of its pay-tv package. With Communications Minister Francis Fox and the CRTC on record as saying they weren't responsible for pay-tv programming, First Choice had suddenly become accountable to no one.

In contrast to the politicians and enforcement officials, those involved in the anti-pornography movement have been tackling the issue head on, grappling with the issues of censorship and erotic pleasure with forthright logic. They maintain pornography is the degradation of women (and children) while erotica is healthy sexuality, based on mutuality and affection. Over the last few years, events such as the Playboy deal served as catalysts for a national awareness campaign in which the extent of the pornography industry has been revealed. The release of *Not A Love Story* in 1981 added an educational perspective to the fervor, as record attendances marked the widespread interest in the issue.

The proliferation of the home video and the satellite businesses forshadow even further markets for pornography, as movies depicting acts of violence and degradation against women pop up in movie rental outlets and on the screens of neighborhood pubs. In the midst of the technological revolution, the video rental business remains virtually unregulated.

Women's fear and their subsequent determination to quash the pornography industry are intensified by an increase in sex related crimes in Canada; a 20 per cent increase since 1976. Coupled with recent statistics on wife abuse (one in ten conser-

vatively) and child molestation including incest (as high as one in four) women are justified in their assertion that their opposition to pornography is an act of self-defence.

Playboy and *Penthouse* magazines reach nine million readers every month, a larger combined circulation than *Time and Newsweek*. With the $10 billion a year pornography industry boasting more outlets than McDonalds, one can only guess how many are being served.

But as the technological revolution intensifies, print pornography is losing its prominence to home videos and pay-tv. Already the U.S. Playboy Channel is showing programs with gang rapes and sadistic sexual tortures as 'erotic' entertainment. Playboy programming was deemed obscene by a Cincinnati county grand jury, when Warner Amex Cable Communications was indicted in July for broadcasting obscene programming on the Playboy Channel.

It's defended as freedom of expression, but whose freedom is being censored when the women in these movies are bound, gagged, tortured and raped? Whose freedom of expression isn't heard at all when the scriptwriters portray women as actually enjoying being cut open or beaten by men? In short, women are the ones silenced.

What sorts of behaviour are internalized by men who use pornography? The trend towards violent pornography appears to be leaving scars not only on the victims, but on an entire society. Neil M. Malamuth, in his research on pornography and violence conducted at the University of Manitoba, discovered a correlation between a tendency to commit acts of aggression against women and a belief in the rape myths perpetrated by pornography. The men in his experiment (35 per cent of whom admitted that they might rape under certain circumstances if they were assured they would not be caught) were found to be similar to convicted rapists in their acceptance of rape myths (women really enjoy being raped) and exhibited high sexual arousal to rape depictions. In another study on rape fantasies, Malamuth reported that men previously categorized as "force-oriented" as well as those who were "non force-oriented" created more violent sexual fantasies after watching a rape slide-audio show.

In an experiment which compared the responses of men and women to different rape depictions, Malamuth found that while some women were aroused when the rape victim was shown experiencing an orgasm and no pain, males were most aroused when the victim experienced an orgasm and pain. From this, Malamuth concluded that stimuli which fuse sexuality and violence may have antisocial effects. Male subjects exposed to rape scenes which depicted women enjoying the rape were found to believe, more than other subjects, that a large percentage of women would derive some pleasure from being raped or forced to engage in various sexual acts. Women who responded to the rape scene positively viewed it more as a seduction since the woman was in no pain and appeared to be enjoying sex. The women didn't believe they would derive any pleasure from actually being raped.

One of Malamuth's most revealing experiments was one in which 271 men and women were exposed to either violent-sexual films or control feature films and then given a Sexual Attitude Survey a few days later, without knowing the connection between the two events. Exposure to violent-sexual films increased male subjects' acceptance of interpersonal violence against women, while women exposed to the violent-sexual films tended to be less accepting of interpersonal violence following the films. Another Malamuth experiment found that exposure to violent pornography increased the levels of electric shock that male subjects could be convinced to administer to a female confederate of the experimenter. Similarly, he found that repeatedly exposing male subjects to violent pornography resulted in self-generated rape fantasies and that they then perceived less victim trauma upon hearing a more realistic rape depiction.

Malamuth's experiment utilized two films, *Swept Away* and *The Getaway*. Both had been released in popular theatres. Malamuth's findings support feminist contentions that mass media violent sexuality has effects on attitudes and behaviours in everyday life. The men in the experiments were university-age 'typical' men. In fact, they represent the bottom end of the scale of the profile of *Playboy* and *Penthouse* readers: potentially upwardly mobile, educated men.

Malamuth also conducted a content analysis survey of cartoons in *Playboy* and *Penthouse*, from 1973 to 1977 and discovered that pictorial violent sexuality increased significantly over the five-year period. *Penthouse* contained 13 per cent sexually violent cartoons, while *Playboy* had 6 per cent. Other forms of rape depiction, such as child rape were not noted in the study, however, a recent *Playboy* cartoon featured a small girl buttoning her blouse walking out of a hotel. She was followed by a man, similarly dressing himself and the caption read "You call that being molested!"

Malamuth suggested that the portrayal of sexual aggression in such mainstream magazines as *Playboy and Penthouse* may actually be more damaging than more "hard core" forms of pornography because the representations appear to be more 'true to life' and acceptable. The subtleties about women's (and men's) sexuality that are communicated in these magazines are subliminally internalized by the reader, Malamuth suggests, even though they are usually not as blatant in their degradation and violence as *Hustler* or *Hogtie* magazines.

Those who argue in favour of the right to use pornography frequently cite a Denmark experiment as proof that pornography acts as a safety valve for the "weirdos" in society. When pornography was legalized there in the 1960s, sex related crimes appeared to diminish. What was not initially publicized however, was that crimes such as voyeurism and sexual harassment were removed from the law books at the same time, creating an illusion of crime decrease. The rate of violent sex related crimes actually increased in Denmark after pornography was legalized.

According to David Scott, a member of the Metro Task Force on Violence Against Women and Children in Toronto, the depiction of sexual violence in Canada has mushroomed in magazines, movies, television and on videotapes. Scott notes that eighty-nine per cent of the pornography available today was either unavailable or sold under the counter in 1970. He also points out that sadomasochistic bondage and domination imagery was the most prevalent imagery in 1,760 heterosexual pornographic magazines surveyed in 1981.

Therein lies the difference between pornography and erotica: one is about hate and one is about love. It seems straightforward, yet feminists are mistakenly linked with right wing moralists who oppose healthy, pleasurable erotica. Bonnie Diamond, a founding member of the Cana-

Protesting the CRTC's involvement in pornography, about 60 women, and men supporters gathered at the CRTC on January 18th.

dian Coalition Against Media Pornography (CCAMP) makes the distinction clear:

"We have absolutely no objection at all to seeing mutual and pleasurable sex on the screen. As a matter of fact, we'd like to see more of that kind of material. There are a lot of people buying pornography who don't necessarily want the package they are getting."

Maude Barlow of CCAMP underlines the degradation in pornography:

"We used to think that pornography represented an opening up of sexual values, that it was the opposite to sexual repression. Now we see that porn is not the opposite of sexual oppression, it's the completion of it. It's what misogyny is all about. It has nothing to do with sex or love between two people."

CCAMP also favours sex education, believing that children who learn about their sexuality grow up with healthy attitudes and are less likely to believe pornography.

The links between pornography and aggression have been made by women experiencing violence first hand as well as sociologists, lawmakers, and psychiatrists. Ann Jones, author of *Women Who Kill: An American Social History* discovered while she was interviewing battered women who had killed their partners that an overwhelming number of the men were consumers of pornography. Irene Diamond of Purdue University researched a number of police reports which indicated that wife batterers were trying to enact a scene in some pornographic publication when they abused the women. A Detroit police superintendent was quoted in the House of Commons by MP Flora McDonald as saying: "There has not been a sex murder in the history of our department in which the killer was not an avid reader of lewd magazines."

Ten per cent of a study sample of women in the San Francisco area interviewed in a study by Dr. Diana Russell of Mills College, California felt that they had been personally victimized by pornography. They said they had been upset when someone tried to get them to do what they had seen in pornographic pictures, movies or books. A similar connection has been made to father-daughter rape cases. Dr. Susan Penfield told a Canadian Psychiatric Association conference last year that in most of the 50 cases of incest she had been involved with, the men had used pornography to induce their daughters to emulate the images.

Pornography is ultimately about power. Because it is so effectively couched in sexual esteem, it is often confused with erotica. More specifically, pornography is about the abuse of sexual power, usually directed against women and children. It is distinguishable by an unequal power relationship, portrayed in a sexual manner. The Toronto Task Force on Public Violence Against Women and Children has proposed a legal definition of pornography as a "theme of violence for the sexual gratification of another or others, including the depiction of submission, coercion, lack of consent or denigration of any human being, where such behaviour can be taken to be condoned."

The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women has adopted Helen Longino's definition (in Take Back the Night) of pornography:

"Pornography is the verbal or pictorial material which represents or describes sexual behaviour that is degrading or abusive to one or more of the participants in such a way as to endorse the degradation."

Degradation is defined by Longino as "behaviour that is degrading or abusive includes physical harm or abuse, and physical or phychological coercion. In addition, behaviour which ignores or devalues the real interests, desires and experiences of one or more participants in any way is degrading. Finally, that a person has chosen or consented to be harmed, abused or subjected to coercion does not alter the degrading character of such behaviour."

In spite of evidence that spinoff effects of pornography do exist, the voice of freedom of expression, uttered by well-intentioned liberals and civil libertarians is the pornographers' greatest ally.

Censorship. The very mention of the word makes grown men cower with irreconcilable fear. A cocky decisiveness overwhelms their senses and the illogic of their trepidation becomes the logic of their forthrightness. We have been told over and over again that discussing the issue of pornography is dangerous because it threatens to limit one's freedom of speech. The argument is based on the premise that men's thoughts will be censored, but women contend that strengthening obscenity laws will allow women the right not to be targeted as objects of hatred and aggression — the right not to be silenced. Women are not presently protected under hate literature laws the way racial and religious minorities are. It is not a crime to incite hatred or acts of aggression against women the way it is against Indians, Jews, or any other minority. Simply put, if it were exclusively Indians or Blacks being tortured, mutilated, whipped or raped in pornography, such depictions would be illegal.

In a democratic society, we accept that individual rights are only guaranteed until such time as these rights threaten the rights of the society. Accordingly, our right to consume alcohol ends when we climb behind the wheel; our right to express opinions is ensured as long as they aren't libellous or harmful to others. So being excluded from the rights of citizenship (the right to be protected from hate literature) is denying women their freedom of speech. Feminist author and strategist Andrea Dworkin takes the freedom of speech argument a step further in *Broadside*, a feminist journal in Toronto:

"Being raped silences you but good. Being battered for opening your mouth keeps you very quiet. Being raped as a child by your father ensures a certain level of silence as you grow older and become an adult.

"The way that I feel about freedom of speech issue, as men understand it and present it to me, is that I am being asked to protect rights that I am being denied simultaneously because I am a woman. In other words, it's like saying 'stand outside the city and guard it but you're not allowed in..

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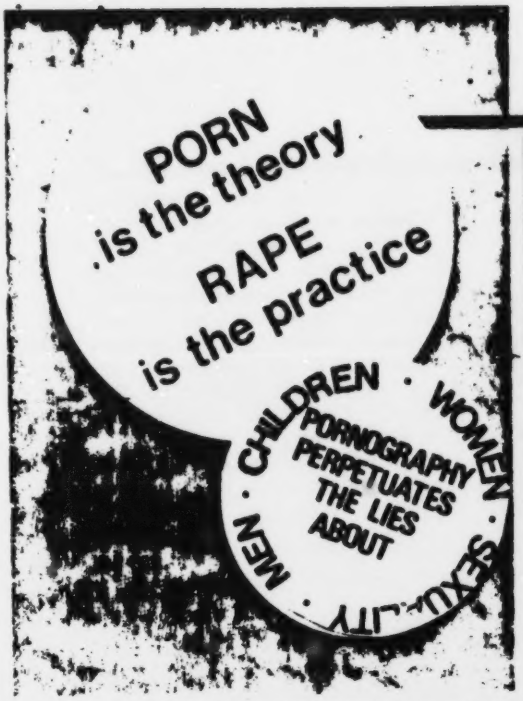

Dworkin is also critical of the political left, who historically support women's issues, but have laid low on the pornography debate.

"Most of the women who are actually exploited in pornography are poor. They're not only economically deprived, many of them are illiterate. A tremendously high number of women are incest victims who ran away from homes in which they were sexually harassed and frequently often battered. To me it's a measure of the bankruptcy of the left that they don't care. They think it's fine that these women be used in the way they're used. There's nothing fine about it. Marxists should be in the forefront of a struggle against pornography: it's the quintessential expression of capitalism, it is the buying and selling of human beings as commodities, it is the implicitly alienated labour, it is the exploitation of labour by virtue of birth, not to mention that it is the exploitation of the poor by the rich," Dworkin asserts.

Censorship already exists in certain forms in our society. There are laws regulating the advertising of medicines and the promotion of tobacco and alcohol and advertising to children. If somone wanted to take out an ad in one of the local newspapers which contained a racist or libellous message, they would be prevented from doing so. If someone wrote a book encouraging the armed overthrow of the government, they would likely not find a printer willing to print it. If they did, they would likely be arrested for treason. As a society, we have already granted that some form of censorship is already a given. The only debate is whether an individual's rights can supercede those of the society, and how the rights of the underprivileged will be ensured.

In Ontario, the film censor board is frequently criticized for splicing depictions of horror and cruelty from movies, which free speech advocates argue they have a 'right' to see. A few eliminations from the board's list in one month include:

"Cut scene of giant octopus' tentacles between girl's thighs and in her mouth with fellatio motions," "eliminate head of girl in toilet," "reduce length of view of woman's face deteriorating due to acid," "eliminate woman's mouth at girl's anus," and "eliminate stump of neck in beheading of dog."

Censor Board director Mary Brown says she has seen an alarming increase in the number of 'snuff' films, which show the slow torture and even murder of the actresses in the porn films.

It has become evident from the growing trend toward violent pornography that the current federal laws on obscenity are outdated and inadequate. The Criminal Code of Canada defines obscenity as "any publication a dominant characteristic of which is the undue exploitation of sex, or sex and any one or more of the following subjects, namely, crime, horror, cruelty and violence." The legal interpretation of the definition has been defined by the courts as strictly sexual, rather than violent or otherwise degrading.

By constitutional right, the provinces have jurisdiction over the administration of the criminal justice system. It is the Attorney-General's responsibility in each province to interpret to a certain extent, how the provisions of the Criminal Code will be dealt with in practice, and to provide guidance to law enforcement officers on the administration of the Code. Surprisingly, the Attorney-General's office in Manitoba has no written guidelines on obscenity. Senior Crown Attorney Wayne Myshkowski feels the present federal guidelines are "not so vague as to be unworkable." He boasts of the Crown's track record of a one hundred per cent conviction rate on obscenity prosecutions in the last year — all six of them.

The procedure for making an obscenity complaint in Manitoba is as follows:

1) a complaint is laid with the vice department of the police; 2) if the police consider the material potentially obscene, it is viewed by three members of the vice department; 3) they in turn pass the material on to the Attorney-General's office where three Crown attorneys view the material and decide if charges will be laid. If the three are in agreement that a conviction can likely be won, 4) charges are laid and a trial ensues.

Myshkowski admits that distributors of video movies don't always preview their movies before renting them out, but he doesn't think they should be classified or viewed by anyone.

"Quite frankly, I don't know who'd want the horrible job of looking at thousands of them...I think the responsibility should lie with distributors who are making a profit off them."

Inspector Clark Peckover of the Vice Division of the police department agrees with Myshkowski on that point.

"They (distributors of porn movies) say they don't have the time to look at all the tapes. If they want to distribute them, they have to have time," he insists, adding that his department hasn't got the time to view all video tapes.

"The police aren't going to act as censors. We act on complaints."

Distributors insist they don't know what the dubious "community standards" are which constitute the courts' basis for deciding if something violates obscenity laws. If something exceeds community standards and constitutes undue exploitation of sex, then it is obscene. Peckover says his department deems obscene that which has no valid story line, is devoid of any literary features and depicts specific sexual acts, as opposed to simulation of sex acts which is alright. Violence in pornography, he says, isn't a problem in Winnipeg.

Currently in Winnipeg a trial on the distrubtion of "Snuff" is pending, although the distributor has entered a guilty plea. Another trial which will soon be before the courts involves more than a dozen video tapes confiscated at a local distributor.

After discussing the current "Snuff" movie trial, Peckover adds: "Maybe it (violence) is there and I haven't seen any because is isn't against the law right now...Maybe I've got my head in the sand."

The biggest problem the vice department has in handling obscenity complaints, Peckover says, is trying to decide what is and what isn't obscene.

The Court of Appeal has spelled out clearly what is obscene and what isn't, Myshkowski maintains, and he insists that Crown Attorneys' personal interpretations on the obscenity laws don't come into play when they decide whether charges will be laid. Clearly, it is not within the mandate of the Crown's office to prevent pornography from being distributed. The office acts upon complaints only, and Myshkowski is satisfied with that.

"We expect the pornography industry to police themselves," he emphasizes.

Because of the ambiguity and apparent confusion over who's responsibility pornography regulation is, the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women has proposed a series of recommendations that hopefully will clear up the grey areas that presently exist.

MACSW releaseu its recommendations on pronography at a tri-level presentation made October 3 to federal, provincial and civic politicians, judges, Crown represen-

Advertisements in porn magazines blatantly encourage the literal silencing of women. Such degradation is currently legal.

tatives, police department officials and policy advisors at various levels. The recommendations include changing the Criminal Code definition of obscenity to include degradation as an element of pornography and making possession of pornography illegal.

Being in possession of pornograpny, no matter how obscene, is not presently against the law, unless it is imported illegally. MACSW also wants the CRTC to seek compliance with broadcasters against degrading representations of women as a condition of licensing. The organization also wants the Broadcast Act amended to protect women from "abusive comment or abusive pictorial representation" in the way racial and religious minorities are.

On a provincial level, MACW urges the Crown and Vice division to establish written guidelines on obscenity, recognizing that the Attorney General's office holds some discretionary power with regards to how the Criminal Code will be interpreted. The organization also wants the Film Classification Board to be empowered to classify all videos before they are saleable/rentable, with the option of recommending to the Attorney-General's office that charges of obscenity be laid if they find it to be pornographic. MACSW also wants the Board to educate its members on the issue of pornography.

Because the arena of satellite programming in pubs is presently an 'untouchable' situation, MACSW wants hotels to post a listing of satellite programming ahead of time, so patrons can be advised as to what programming will be featured in an establishment. With listings posted, a viewer will also have access to the movie title in case they make an obscenity complaint with the police. Hotels showing video tapes will have to be licensed to show the tapes, as well as any other private function where an entry fee is charged.

As a follow up to the satellite listing recommendation, (which many bars already do), MACSW wants a committee of Crown, vice and film board representatives to monitor satellite stations which show pornography with the possibility of prohibiting hotel owners from showing certain satellite station(s) if they are found to be largely pornographic in content. Failing this, MACSW wants the Vice Division to assume responsibility for getting a copy of a satellite program against which a complaint has been laid.

Porn in Winnipeg

The availability of print pornography varies greatly from store to store in Winnipeg, but it is clear that the availability of what feminists call hard core pornography is becoming increasingly commonplace. One gift store that sells 'adult' magazines in St. Boniface shelves more than 40 pornographic magazines: sadistic, violent and without exception degrading. The manager of the store says the 'worst' of it goes back to the distributing company. All of the magazines are displayed out in the open at eye level. They include:

Family Affairs: A pocket size magazine about incest, containing various stories about the pleasures and rewards of incest between fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, sons and fathers, sisters and brothers, nephews and aunts and between sisters. In all of the stories involving fathers/daughters, the daughters are portrayed as being the initiators: ". .I was lying in the rack of my daddy's truck, pretending to be asleep, pretending to be unaware that my bare ass was glistening in the moonlight, just inches from his face. God, how I wanted him to take care of me!"

A similar deliberate deception is illustrated with young girls and uncles, serving to remove the responsibility from men who perpetrate sexual assault against girls. "...My uncle had a fetish for eye-appealing lingerie, so I teased him constantly by parading around the house in my lacy slips. He got even with me, when my parents weren't home, by yanking down my lace panties, pushing up my slip and ramming his cock up my ass. He knew I was still a virgin and didn't want to penetrate that area."

Hustler magazine, its slick, glossy black and red cover boasting the words "X-rated" in bold, huge letters on the cover. Inside an interview with Tim O'Hara, editor of the Rene Guyon Society's newsletter, an organization of pedophiles which boasts the slogan: "Sex by eight, or it's too late." In the article, Tim O'Hara appears (disguised?), looking strikingly like Adolf Hitler. He comes across as a 'liberator' of children's uncontrollable sexual desires, while the *Hustler* interviewer plays devil's advocate.

One of the photo spreads in *Hustler* features "Cynthia Baby Face", a young blonde girl who looks no more than fifteen. Posed in a white child's smock in a garden of flowers, Cynthia Baby Face poses with her china doll, dressed in black patent shoes and baby blue stockings. She offers her vagina, buttocks and breasts as she innocently smells a flower, or sleeps

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(looking strikingly like a child curled up in bed) with her labia exposed between her spread legs. The caption reads: "I like to be swept up and smothered by a big man. You would be surprised what a little girl can do." In what is either the ultimate irony or the ultimate in target market techniques, an advertisement for the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse appears towards the back of the magazine. In an ad beckoning readers to write for more information on child abuse, it reminds *Hustler* readers that an estimated one million children suffered physical, sexual or emotional abuse in the United States last year.

Several women who work in stores selling these and other porn magazines expressed disgust at having to sell the material. At one store, which only carried *Playboy* and *Playgirl*, a woman said "And that's two too many." Others send back the magazines they receive monthly from Canadian News, refusing to stock the material.

Canadian News, the distribution company which handles most of the magazines, says it only distributes what customs permits into the country. While many retailers return magazines every month, Maurice Mousseau, General Manager of Canadian News says "no retailer is forced to keep a publication. If they request that it be stopped altogether, then that is done."

A walk down Portage Avenue can net you a variety of pornographic magazines not so readily available at corner stores. *Hogtie* features women bound with ropes, some being pulled up by their wrists behind their backs, with leather muzzles on their faces, eye covers, black leather chokers, chains and ropes, in various states of undress. The depictions represent the ultimate in silencing, in control and power. In these magazines, of which there are about 300 to choose from in Solar News alone, sex per se, is conspicuously absent. The women are bound to the point of pain. The copy that surrounds the pictures fills in what the photos are unable to provide:

"Unfortunately Prudence chooses this moment to struggle. She struggles against the rope most attractively. Both Herr Schmidt and myself acquire erections. I can see but one course to follow. I gag Prudence."

"Ah, that is better," Herr Schmidt approves. "And now the whip."

Again, the onus of responsibility is removed from the men to whom the magazine is obviously directed. After all, the women want to be bound, choked and whipped. The message is clear. They must love it.

"First he ties my wrists behind my back, then my ankles are tied together. Next is the gag. I don't want to be able to talk, advise, bitch or complain." Of course, men are not depicted in these magazines constricted and dehumanized in any fashion.

Acting Superintendent of Customs and Excise International Mail Branch René Pelletier says customs guidelines on obscenity include fornication, buggary, cunnilingus, fellatio, annilingus, erections and the insertion of dildoes. Violence and other forms of degradation are allowed, as long as the above mentioned acts aren't involved.

Echoing the sentiments of Peckover, Pelletier says his job would be a lot easier if there were clear cut guidelines on obscenity for him to follow. Under the Tariff Act, prohibited goods include books, photos, movies "or representations of any kind of a treasonable, seditious or of an indecent or immoral character."

A visit to several video movie rental outlets in Winnipeg offers customers a listing of videos with degradation and violence in living, more believable moving color:

Vanessa, a European woman raised in a convent arrives at a tropical hideaway, where she is raped, has hallucinations about a woman mutilating her own genitals, dreams of the days she was whipped by her Mother Superior, manacles herself into a torture frame where she is whipped by a man and finally is seduced by another woman. Her male tormentor tells her that "women cannot resist pain — it increases their pleasure."

Snuff, a Mexican movie in which after scenes of gruesome murders, the camera pulls back as some of the actors discuss how they were turned on by the acting out of the murder. Some of the actors proceed to actually murder one of the women, after cutting off her finger, sawing off her arm and eventually cutting open her stomach, pulling out her intestines.

Ring of Desire, in which a woman is

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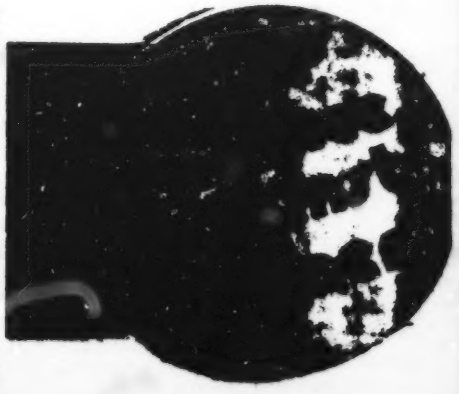

chained to a bed while being sodomized.

I Spit On Your Grave, a graphically violent movie depicting gang rape and scenes of degradation and violence.

Walk into your neighborhood pub any evening for a relaxing beer with some friends and you never know what might appear on the video screen. Hotel owners with satellite dishes are privy to porn from the U.S. and many of them channel it into their beverage rooms. They aren't required to keep track of the names of the porn they show in case an obscenity complaint is made and there is nothing requiring them to forewarn patrons that pornography will be shown. The experience of one woman tells of the utter frustration many women experience when this happens.

"Very shortly after the movie started, within ten or fifteen minutes, there was a rape scene...It was a party and this woman walked off by herself into the bush or the forest and this man came after her. She was running and trying to get away, but she couldn't and he caught up with her and started to getting into verbal harassment first. Then he started to attack her and rip her clothes off and hit her and punched her.

I walked next door into the restaurant (to complain to the manager.)

I was really livid. I told him that it was disgusting and I was also going to tell all the people I knew who had frequented it about this and that we weren't prepared to use his establishment as a place to drink. He was very condescending and he said things to me like:

"You obviously don't watch much T.V. do you, dear?"

Not all hotel owners are as unresponsive. The Norwood Hotel, for example, only shows video movies which are not pornographic and welcomes customers' feedback on movies that are shown.

Inspector Peckover admits that it would be almost impossible to prosecute a hotel on obscenity charges if it was showing pornography via satellite in a public bar. The way the laws are presently set up, in order for the procedure to get underway, the vice division has to obtain a copy of the tape shown. Since satellite programming is on the television one minute and gone without a trace the next, the program would have to be copied or be otherwise available for the police's scrutiny.

"The new technology causes us concern. Once it is shown, there is nothing to be done. It's over with. It's the satellite stuff that bothers us."

The victories in the pornography battle have been few and far between, but for that reason they are worth celebrating. The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women recently conducted a survey of bars in Winnipeg to discern which hotels were pornography free in their beverage rooms. MACSW now offers a list of hotels to those who wish to support the 45 or 50 porn-free bars in Winnipeg. In their travels, the women who did the leg work for the survey discovered at the Cambridge beverage room that porn movies were stopped because of customers' complaints. Following listeners' complaints laid at CFRW Radio in Winnipeg, the FM station Q-94 removed an advertisement from the air for *Penthouse* magazine. On a national level, a video game in which the object of the game was to rape a native woman and 'score' would have made it into the country if a public outcry against the pornographic game hadn't pressured customs officials to disallow it across the border.

Pornography has seeped into almost every form of entertainment in our culture. Music concerts, such as the recent Tubes concert in Winnipeg, often feature mock rapes on stage, intended to excite the audience. Free Press concert reviewer Frain Cory reported that the Tubes concert represented "one of the ugliest displays of sexual exploitation and mock brutality ever associated with rock and roll." The Bay in Winnipeg eventually removed a series of window displays in which heaps of women mannequins' bodies lay beside models dressed in the latest fall fashions. Advertisements with rape-like images have become commonplace as images of sexual domination become internalized and acceptable 'vogue.'

Moviegoers across the country last winter were accosted by images of lighted cigarettes being applied to a women's breasts in Videodrome, a Canadian-made movie made possible with money from the Canadian Film Development Corporation, which in turn is funded with taxpayer's money. The movie contained endless scenes of naked women being flogged and murdered. One woman is depicted as begging her lover to cut her open while he has sex with her and he rams pins through her earlobes, allegedly to heighten her sexual experience. Then he licks the blood from her earlobes.

The growing trend in mass media to portray women as willing participants in their brutalization is a dangerous trend, according to Maude Barlow of CCAMP and only furthers what she calls the "male masochism in the mass media." It removes men from the realm of responsibility for

"Dismembered" mannequins appeared alongside the latest fall fashions recently in The Bay's display windows, exemplifying the "Chic vogue" of violence.

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their actions of aggression, as the fantasy of women enjoying pain becomes real for them on the screen.

Federal Justice Minister Mark McGuigan proposed changes to the Criminal Code which would include "degrading representations" in the legal definition of obscenity and bring video tapes under the provisions. At the same time as he announced the proposed changes though, he established a committee to study pornography and prostitution to report back to the House of Commons by the end of 1984. Ostensibly, the move is a good one, but it will likely be circumvented after the federal election next summer if the liberals lose. With large numbers of video distributors pouring into the courts on obscenity charges, it would be a circumvention of justice to wait until after a federal election for a workable definition of obscenity to be defined. In Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Vancouver and Sault Ste. Marie video raids have netted police hundreds of porn tapes in the past few months alone.

Not all law enforcement people are relying on the federal government to make changes for them, as the Toronto police have demonstrated. A joint antipornography squad comprised of Metro Toronto and Ontario Provincial police —called Project P — has laid 90 charges and seized more than 1,000 video tapes. Metro Toronto Council recently enacted a bylaw requiring retail stores that sell pornographic magazines and books to keep

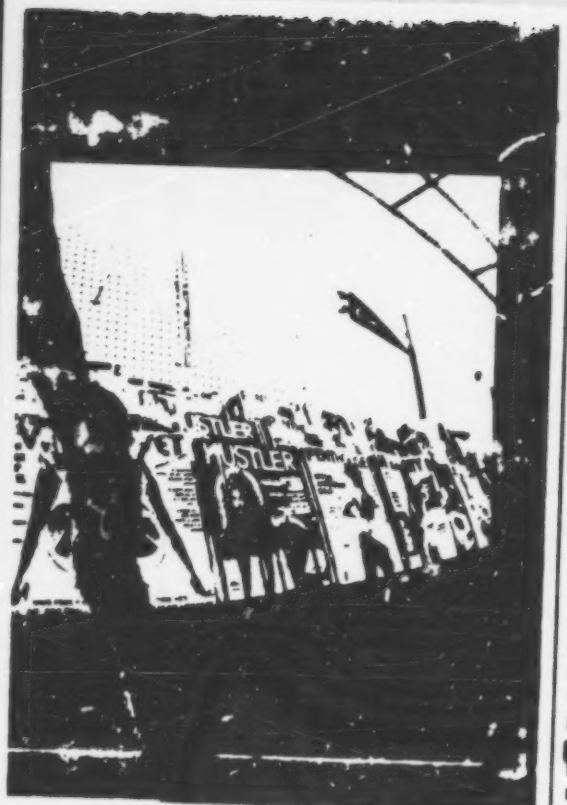
them at least 1.5 metres above floor level and placed behind an opaque barrier so that only the titles are visible.

A County Court judge's ruling in Ontario appears to have set a precedent on the distribution of hard core pornography. The case involved a man who had his pornographic magazines of pregnant women (*Milky Moms, Poppin Mamas, Pregnant Mamas*) confiscated by Canada Customs and then challenged the decision, seeking protection under the constitution. The judge ruled that the right of freedom of expression does not exist for users of pornography and that customs' officials can search mail for pornography, other than letters.

Women in B.C. have demonstrated other more direct means of protesting pornography. Fed up with the often tedious and inadequate system of criminal justice, the Wimmin's Fire Brigade launched an attack against pornography stores in Vancouver last November with Molotov Cocktails. The women succeeded in igniting more than two of the porn stores, as the public campaign across B.C. caught fire. Within a few weeks of the fire bombings, six porn stores had closed, moved away or withdrawn much of their stock, apparently out of fear that they would be the next targets. A few short weeks later, police raided a dozen porn shops and seized thousands of tapes. While many women's groups in B.C. were reluctant at first to express their sympathy for the tactics of the Wimmin's Fire Brigade, it was obvious that the attack helped speed up the wheels of justice in that province. Sadly, the final outcome of the anti-porn campaign in B.C. was a $300 fine for Red Hot Video Ltd. for distributing three tapes which showed "undue exploitation of sex." One tape opened with a scene of a man ejaculating on a woman's face, while the others contained scenes of sexual violence and abuse of women. Feminists in B.C. quickly pointed out that the judge focussed entirely on the sexual explicitness of the films, in handing down his decision and didn't even mention the degradation humiliation and violence which women had objected so vociferously to.

On a national level, a comprehensive system of changes is needed within the legal system to reflect the concerns of women who are victimized by the pornography industry. A legal definition of obscenity which includes human degradation will be essential to the curtailment of the hard core trend. The CRTC, as the governing body over broadcasting in Canada should implement guidelines on sexism and pornography, such as those recommended by the Report on the Task Force on Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Broadcast Media. As the licensing agency for television and pay-tv, the CRTC should enforce such guidelines on licensees. With such a clause in place, pornography would be disqualified for broadcast on public airwaves. The Coalition Against Media Pornography recommends that the CRTC guidelines apply to any federally funded film or pay-tv programming.

Customs and post office guidelines on what constitutes obscenity would help eliminate the grey areas surrounding por-



nography and make the system of pornography imports and confiscations less tedious and obscure.

Specific regulations are needed to protect children from the exploitation of the porn industry as well as measures to prosecute those who contribute to it. The federal government came close to making recommendations on child pornography last year, but ducked out at the last minute, referring the matter to a committee instead.

The movement to extend protection to women from misogynist literature and other degrading representations has evolved into a positive, progressive social movement with growing support. The anti-pornography lobby is an active self-defence mechanism created by those who are victims, not only of a flourishing pornography industry, but who are further brutalized in a society with increasing violence (including sexual violence) toward women and children. It is a multi-billion dollar business which profits from degrading women and children and sanctions that violence. Any argument of individual rights must include an understanding of the rights of the victims of pornography.

As Dolores Gold, a professor in the Psychology Department at Concordia University concludes:

"Everyone has to live with the behaviour and opinions of people who are influenced by violent pornography, and everyone has to live in a society that allows profit-making depictions of women suffering for the sexual titillation of others."

What you can do about Pornography

- Talk to your friends and family about pornography (give them this article to read).
- Take them to see "Not A Love Story" at the National Film Board.
- Write your member of parliament in Ottawa (no stamp required) at the House of Commons, Ottawa, K1A 0A6 and your MLA in Manitoba (at the Legislative Building, Winnipeg, R3C 0V8). Tell them you are concerned about the increase in pornography and that you want women and children to be protected from hate literature in the form of pornography, in the same way other minorities are. Tell them degradation is an element of pornography.
- Write the Minister of Communications, House of Commons, Ottawa, K1A 0A6 and the CRTC c/o Secretary General's Office, Ottawa, K1A 0N2, demanding regulations prohibiting the degradation of women in all forms of broadcasting, as a condition of licence.
- Write to Attorney-General Roland Penner demanding that his office set up guidelines on obscenity.
- Ask your local store owners who sell pornography to remove it from their shelves. Tell them it offends you and that you are going to take your business somewhere else.
- Lay a complaint with the vice division (or equivalent in rural areas) of the police department (In Winnipeg call 985-6276) if you have seen a film or publication that you feel is obscene. Make a note of where and what offended you. The police can only act on complaints.
- If you are unsatisfied with their decision, contact the Attorney-General's office.
- Remove pornography from your home.
- Get a copy of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women's Hotel Survey which lists porn-free beverage rooms in hotels in Winnipeg, and/or join the committee to support their actions against pornography for $15 (224-388 Donald St., Winnipeg R3B 2J2).
- Join the Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography (CCAMP), for $15. Send name and address to CCAMP P.O. Box 1065, Station B Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R1.
- Get a copy of Julian Riddington's paper on pornography from the National Association of Women and the Law for $5: 305-124 O'Connor St., Ottawa, K1P 5M9.

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The Wpg. Sun. Tues. Oct 4th/83

PORN SHOW SHOCKS

By SHIRLEY MUIR
Sun Staff Writer

Winnipeg VIP's were hit with 22 minutes of hard core pornopgraphy yesterday and it left many of them aghast.

Politicians, judges and lawyers watched film excerpts of vicious gang rapes, rape-murders and child rapes.

The showing was a bid by two groups, the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women and the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, to shock Winnipeg decision-makers into taking action against violent pornography.

The pornography is either available on pay television or through local video shops.

Attorney General Roland Penner said he knew "this material" was around but had never seen it and found it "shocking."

MP Cyril Keeper said the film was "hard to take and left my stomach churning."

"It's very difficult to watch," he said.

MLA Mary Beth Dolin called it "frightening and nauseating."

"I have two adolscent boys and I'm appalled to think they could come home with something like that," she said.

Penner said provincial attorney generals support the federal minister of justice's move to strength obscenity laws but said his office can't step up prosecutions until that is done.

MACSW called on Penner to at least draw up guidelines based on the existing laws so the police department and Crown attorneys can take action.

Penner said it's a reasonable request and he's prepared to discuss it with the group.

The film was designed by the Canadian Council Against Pornography and MACSW spokesperson Elizabeth Coffman said it has a clear message.

"It suggests violence is cool, brutality chic and abuse a turn on. What is sold as vogue becomes women's pain," Coffman said.

The CANADIAN COALITION AGAINST MEDIA PORNOGRAPHY is composed of concerned individuals who recognize that pornography and sex-role stereotyping violate the dignity and right to self-determination of women. We define pornography as verbal or pictorial material representing sexual behaviour that is degrading or abusive to one or more of the participants in such a way as to endorse the degradation, and believe it to be substantially different from erotica, which we consider to be mutually pleasurable sexual expression between people who have enough power to be there by positive choice. We are not for the repression of sexuality but rather are seeking a new portrayal of mutuality and respect in the representation of sexuality.

The CANADIAN COALITION AGAINST MEDIA PORNOGRAPHY believes that pornography and sex-role stereotyping, a multi-billion dollar industry in North America, promotes a climate in which women's physical safety in the street and in the home is jeopardized, and women's right to equality in the workplace continues to be denied. We are particularly concerned with recent government and business sponsorship of pornography on television and in the Canadian film industry and believe it to be a violation of the cultural integrity of Canadian artists and performers.

CCAMP's objective is to increase public awareness of the negative images inherent in pornography. Our elected officials must be pressured to strengthen and enforce the laws which will create an environment in which women, men and children are all assured equality, dignity and self-respect.

Your membership and active participation will provide the necessary clout to achieve this objective.

.....

Application for Membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____ Postal code: _____

Telephone number: _____

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☐ My contribution to support these activities is enclosed.
☐ Due to my present circumstances I am contributing ____ for a membership.

Please make cheques payable to
Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography
P.O. Box 1065, Station B
Ottawa, Ontario. K1P 5R1

EY Council backs McDonald in crusade against TV porn

By DAVE BUTLER

In an effort to restrict sex and violence on pay television, Broadview-Greenwood MP Lynn McDonald appeared before East York council on March 7 and enlisted its support for her bid to change federal television regulations.

During her 15-minute speech to council, McDonald said the existing Broadcasting Act states: "No station, network operator, or pay television licensee shall broadcast. . . any abusive comment or abusive pictorial representation on any race, religion or creed."

McDonald wants the word "sex" inserted after "creed" to ensure the protection of women. After considerable debate, council passed a motion supporting such an amendment.

McDonald said she had seen excerpts from the American version of Playboy Network, which has sold programming to First Choice pay TV in Canada. One pay TV channel in the U.S. plays Playboy once a day for three hours and includes graphic sex and violence against women, she said.

LAW NEEDED

The possibility of a similar situation in Canada is so great that legislation must be passed as a preventive measure, she said.

Alderman Mike Wyatt asked McDonald if she wanted all sex taken off the airwaves, or just "a certain type of sex."

She said she is concerned with the combination of sex and violence. "It is not just what is shown. It is how it is shown."

Wyatt said he supported McDonald's campaign to change the regulations and called Playboy Weekend "appalling."

"I think it goes beyond artistic freedom," he said. "A network

MP LYNN MCDONALD

dedicated to exploitation and sexuality" is not what the country needs, he added.

"We cannot allow this type of crudity on TV."

Alderman Bob Willis also supported the campaign but said council might be "jumping on First Choice" for no reason.

PRESUPPOSING

"People concerned with First Choice haven't done anything wrong. . . We presuppose that they will be doing something wrong," he said.

However, "pornography, period, is not necessary" and "violence for the sake of violence is not acceptable in society," he said.

Aldermen Ken Paige and Cy Reader had doubts about the immediate need for the legislation.

"I support the concept (of regulation) but not this particular motion," said Paige.

"Maybe we are concerning ourselves with community standards but because there are no problems like this yet, I cannot see what community standards we are measuring," he said.

Reader suggested the matter be brought before committee to study the proposal and "look into the matter a little bit deeper."

NO PANIC

"I can't see at this time, based on the information, that there is any panic here," he said.

Although most aldermen felt the issue is a federal matter, the motion to support the proposal by McDonald was passed 7-2.

"We don't have any insights (on federal legislation)," said Mayor David Johnson. "I do have misgivings as expressed by Mr. Reader and Mr. Paige and I am willing to support the intent. We can pass these kinds of laws but the onus is on the parents (to control their children's television viewing)," he said.

McDonald suggested that council write Communications Minister Francis Fox to ask him to introduce the legislation. Asking East York MPs to support such legislation is another alternative, she said.

— The Observer, March 18, 1983

Judge deems obscenity laws vague

Judge sympathizes with movie distributor over obscenity law

A provincial court judge who fined a movie distributor $200 yesterday on obscenity charges said he sympathized with the accused because of the law's vagueness.

Judge Charles Rubin told Leo Rosenberg, president of CLR Movie Distributors Ltd., he was aware of confusion in the application of the obscenity law in Canada where "no one is prepared to do the censoring for you until after the fact. It's a jungle for the operators," Judge Rubin said later in an interview.

"The law-makers have a duty to show them some direction but they don't get any direction at all."

The company was charged for distributing two video cassettes entitled Please Mr. Postman and Touch Me in the Morning. After they were seized by vice officers Aug. 5, 1982, the Crown viewed the movies and decided they were obscene. Rosenberg pleaded guilty on behalf of his company to two counts of distributing obscene matter.

Defence lawyer Bruce Cristall told the court Rosenberg was not aware the soft-core movies were obscene. He tendered a letter his client had received from Revenue Canada which declared the video cassettes were duty-free and admissable into the country.

"My client looks at it and believes they are all right," Cristall said. "It is very difficult for distributors to know whether they are obscene or not."

He said distributors of some hard-core pornographic films are not being prosecuted and only Rosenberg's company, out of nine distributors in Canada, is being charged with the offence.

"There seems to be a double standard in Canada," said Cristall.

Outside the court Judge Rubin said that since the 1974 Manitoba Court of Appeal judgment in the Last Tango in Paris obscenity case, films are ruled obscene if they exceed the "limits of tolerance according to contemporary community standards."

"But in effect the community standard varies from place to place," he said.

The situation is puzzling to distributors who are told a movie did well in Toronto and Vancouver but when they bring it to Winnipeg they end up in court because it's believed to be obscene, said Judge Rubin.

Senior Crown Attorney Wayne Myshkowsky said the Attorney General's Department is not responsible for what happens in other provinces.

"We expect pornography to be a self-policing industry," he said during an interview yesterday. "The Crown and the police don't pre-screen movies. For us to take that up on our shoulders would make us censors."

Since 1974 and the Last Tango in Paris decision the prosecution has not lost any obscenity cases, he said.

"Part of our success is that we don't prosecute borderline cases," said the prosecutor. "We only prosecute those cases that we feel are clearly obscene. On the rest we give the benefit of the doubt to the distributors."

Myshkowsky agreed that obscenity is a tough area of law to deal with because of the lack of a precise definition.

Censorship's a must in any sane society

MICHELE LANDSBERG

If I were to begin this column with a string of four-letter words, it would be yanked out of the paper. If I listed here the names of half a dozen pornographic magazines my editor would have to delete them.

Censorship and self-censorship go on as a matter of rote. Newspaper writers know and abide by the rules: We must not libel, the limits of the courts must be upheld, we must not violate the family, avoid obscenity, and we must unduly antagonize any of the special interest groups [illegible] — who thunders more vociferously than the newspaper journalist demanding an end to film censorship? And the justification for press censorship is that newspapers go into family homes, journalists can write with outrage at the mere thought that video porn, drenching the living rooms of the nation, should be subject to the same [illegible]

But what goes on here? Is it hypocrisy? Or is it unconscious self-deception? I think it's the latter; writers naturally have a stake in freedom of speech. Maybe they attack film censorship all the more vociferously because they have to knuckle under to so many restrictions on their own writing. Whatever the cause, I think there are myths, distortions and biases that have crept into the media coverage of the censorship debate. Here are a few of them:

Myth Number One: "Hurray," said the free speech advocates last week. "The Supreme Court of Ontario has ruled that the Ontario censor violates the Charter of Rights!" Not really. The court's decision, which I have just read, was actually a vindication of the idea of censorship.

"Some prior censorship of film is demonstrably justifiable in a free and democratic society," the judges wrote, emphasizing that most free and democratic countries have censor boards. "The fundamental freedoms (of expression) guaranteed in the Charter of Rights are not absolute . . . It is sometimes necessary to restrict the freedom of expression to an extent to protect the interest of society."

The judges did say that the censor is acting without a legal leg to stand on, though, until the Ontario government draws up clear regulations on what is to be censored. I hope the government acts swiftly and firmly. And I hope it has the good sense to invite leading women experts to be part of that process.

Myth Number Two: Obscenity Laws Are Enough. Many anti-censorship people insist that porn be dealt with solely by the outdated and inadequate federal obscenity law. Judge for yourself: That law prohibits the "undue exploitation of sex with violence or horror." But it defines "sex" almost exclusively in terms of pictures of intercourse or an erect penis. A picture of a naked woman, bound, gagged and tortured, is just violence — not sex — and therefore not obscene. Only if there's an erect penis in the picture is it "sex with violence." The law is ridiculous.

Myth Number Three: Pornography Provides An Outlet For Crazies. Not true, or at least not proven. The defenders of pornography always end up citing Denmark, where the legalization of pornography is supposed to have caused a drop in the rate of sex crimes.

This is a distortion. What happened was that minor sex crimes were removed from the criminal code at the same time as porn was allowed to become Denmark's third largest industry. The sheer volume of sex crimes declined because of these changes in the law. But the amount of rape and violence against women went up.

If porn provides such a catharsis, argues sociologist Jill Ridington, why did Dr. Susan Penfold of Vancouver report that most of the 50 men she treated for the crime of incest with their daughters owned large amounts of incest pornography? Why do so many sex criminals — like Clifford Olson — have suitcases stuffed with porn before they commit their crimes?

Myth Number Four: It's All A Harmless Fantasy. This seems the craziest to me. If you want to judge the overwhelming power of the visual image to affect our psyches, ask the television advertisers. They spend billions of dollars precisely because they know how film can influence our behavior.

Can anyone seriously argue that a thorough saturation of images — in rock music, on billboards, in magazines, video, films, pay-TV — of women being violated has no affect on the minds of men who consume the stuff? This is willful blindness.

Myth Number Five: Toronto's skin magazine cover-up bylaw is a serious infringement on our freedoms. Really? It seems perfectly sensible to me. Until now, 6-year-old kids trotting in to buy sugarless bubblegum were often confronted, at eye-level, with pictures of women writhing under the whip. How does this pervasive coarseness and woman-hatred affect the minds of children? Why should pornographers have total freedom to flaunt their wares and to spread their incredible anti-human grossness all through our society?

Myth Number Six: The Ontario censor is a menace, secretly snipping away at sexual expression. That's false. If you're interested, you can pick up the "elimination list" every month from the Theatres Branch, telling you exactly what has been cut from each movie.

Vast rivers of graphic sex are

See WE/page F2

We must censor out pornography

Continued from page F1

shown constantly in Ontario theatres. Mostly, the censor cuts out ghoulish violence. Here are just a few "eliminations" from last month's list: "Cut scene of giant octopus's tentacles between girl's thighs and in her mouth with fellatio motions," "eliminate head of girl in toilet," "reduce length of view of woman's face deteriorating due to acid," "eliminate woman's mouth at girl's anus," "eliminate stump of neck in beheading of dog."

Poor Mary Brown: As Ontario's censor, she's also taken all the flak for her strategically fatal attempts to control high-cream sadism against women and the exploitation of children as sex objects (Pretty Baby and The Tin Drum). But I think her intuitions were right. Chic and glossy as it was, Lena Wertmuller's Swept Away, for example, made it OK for a woman to be raped and sexually enslaved so long as it was a Worker raping a Rich Bitch.

What do film reviewers say about the fact that University of Manitoba students who saw the film were measurably more willing, by their own admission, to commit rape? Is that just a hohum, too-bad by-product of free speech? Who pays for free speech?

I do concede that it's virtually impossible to censor all the anti-woman brutality in films like Swept Away. But surely we can regulate the amount of violent sex on TV, just as we regulate the timing of commercials and the amount of Canadian content? The pornographers have had a free ride too long; so have the free speech advocates who have never responsibly or seriously considered the harm that porn does to us all.

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Entertainment

Govt. shows double-think in attitudes to pornography

Jamie Portman
Southam News

Last week, Canadian movie-goers were treated to the spectacle of lighted cigarettes being applied to a woman's naked breast.

What's more, their tax dollars helped make it possible.

This sado-masochistic display is only one of several such scenes from a new film called *Videodrome*, which was partly financed by public money.

It just goes to show that there is a good deal of double-talk and double-think in government attitudes towards pornography.

It's ironic that in the same week Communications Minister Francis Fox was once again denouncing the relatively innocuous presence of bouncing Playboy Bunnies on Canadian pay television, the government's Canadian Film Development Corporation should stand revealed as an investor in a nauseating piece of garbage like *Videodrome*.

The movie, which opened Friday in major cities across the continent, is the latest creation of Canadian writer-director David Cronenberg, whom *New York Post* columnist Rex Reed describes as a "weirdo."

Cronenberg is a master of the shock and schlock school of film-making. His earlier achievements include *Scanners* (with its scenes of exploding heads) and *Shivers* (in which unspeakably slimy creatures wreak havoc with female eroticism.)

With *Videodrome*, Cronenberg outdoes himself. Max, his so-called hero (James Woods), runs a television channel devoted to special programming — "soft-core pornography and hard-core violence."

This character is constantly on the watch for kinky new delights. His satellite dish picks up the output of a mysterious new company called Videodrome, which specializes in endless scenes of naked women actually being flogged and murdered.

Max's girl-friend (rock singer Deborah Harry) is captivated by these scenes.

"I like it. It turns me on," she announces to Max. She shows him some scars on her shoulder. "Take out your Swiss army knife and cut me here."

Max does more than that. He and his lady hop into bed where he runs hot pins through her ear lobes in order to heighten her orgasms and then goes to work on her with lighted cigarette ends.

Predictably, the girl-friend can't wait to become a victim on one of the Videodrome shows. As for Max, he discovers that the evil geniuses behind Videodrome can also induce gory hallucinations in the viewer and cause brain tumors.

Max's stomach keeps splitting into a gaping, slimy hole through which unpleasant objects pass in and out. And there's a revolting climax in which the villain sprouts grisly mutations from various portions of his anatomy.

Cronenberg seeks to excuse these excesses by giving them a philosophical veneer — in *Videodrome*, he's preaching that TV technology is a menace to our minds — which is no doubt why the CFDC seems so willing to finance his films with tax money.

But in truth, a film like *Videodrome* represents the crudest form of sexual exploitation, hypocritically passing itself as a morality fable while at the same time inviting its audiences to revel in gratuitous violence that has as its centrepiece the mutilation and degradation of women.

Censorship poses a vexing problem. Most thoughtful Canadians, even when confronted with a sick item like *Videodrome*, think that government should not try to control our viewing or reading habits and that the courts should be the final arbiter of what is obscene.

Francis Fox, the minister responsible for such cultural agencies as the CFDC, believes in the arm's-length principle for these bodies. He would probably argue it would be inappropriate to interfere with the CFDC's autonomy, even when it indulges in the financing of a film like *Videodrome*.

It's therefore all the more astonishing that Fox — one of the most able culture ministers this country has ever had — should continue to harass the First Choice pay television network over its plan to produce adult fare in association with Playboy.

One can certainly accuse First Choice of betraying the spirit of its Canadian content obligations. But it seems grossly unfair that it should be made the scapegoat for a highly emotional, uninformed anti-pornography campaign aided and abetted by a government that would have been wiser to remain aloof.

The truth is that governments don't know where they stand on the issue. The federal government invests in sado-masochistic bilge like *Videodrome*. The CN-owned (which means government-owned) Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal offers closed-circuit showings of *The Erotic Secrets of Emmanuelle* to its guests. Yet the government picks on privately owned First Choice for planning to show a few hours of Playboy material.

Meanwhile, the Ontario censor board passes *Videodrome* while banning the National Film Board's controversial *Not a Love Story*. If all this doesn't add up to hypocrisy, what does?